

1946

REPORT OF THE CONTINUING COMMITTEE

of the

STATE-WIDE VETERANS CONFERENCE OF NEW JERSEY

held in Newark, July 19, 1946

approved by the
Continuing Committee
July 29, 1946

Under specific authorization the Continuing Committee of the State-Wide Veterans Conference of New Jersey expresses appreciation to all persons who contributed to the success of the recent Conference on the problems of Negro veterans. It wants to particularly thank the Administrator of Veterans Affairs for representation from his office, and the Manager of the New Jersey Regional office for representation and other cooperation.

Discussions of Veterans Administration representatives were enlightening. The Conference appreciated the interpretation of the Veterans Administration's great efforts on behalf of veterans. However, the Continuing Committee in making a true summary of findings, in the following statement reflects the concern of the Conference over the proportionately unequal aid afforded Negro veterans, whose problems are already proportionately more serious because of general racial prejudices.

The Veterans Administration and the Negro veteran.

1. Educational and On-the-Job-Training.

Despite the fact that the Veterans Administration and its related national agencies have insisted that they are as interested in the problems of Negro veterans as in the problems of white veterans, it appears:

- a. That there is a systematic exclusion of Negroes from G.I. benefits of most interest to Negroes, educational and on-the-job-training aids.
- b. That there is no evidence in the whole state of New Jersey, that Negroes are being accepted for worthwhile apprenticeship training.
- c. That the Veterans Administration abandons Negro veterans when local discriminatory practices thwart the employment, educational or vocational training objectives of Negro veterans.

- d. That the Veterans Administration hides behind a peculiarly comfortable interpretation of the law under which it operates, as it fails to effect proportionately equal help for Negro as well as for white veterans.
- e. Specific instances were aired of failure of Negro veterans to receive medical care through the Veterans Administration after Veterans Administration approval of their entitlement. Moreover, veterans finding themselves in some other states are discriminated against by many veterans hospitals, and are not admitted to certain veterans hospitals because of their color.

The Conference urges the Administrator of Veterans Affairs to take definite action to eliminate completely these discriminatory practices which deny Negro veterans the right to decent medical care whenever and wherever he finds himself in need of such care.

- Be it resolved, that:

The representatives from the state of New Jersey should arrange for the introduction into either house of our national Congress, an amendment making it mandatory for the Veterans Administration to follow-through on the behalf of a veteran who has been thwarted in reaching his objective merely because he is a member of a minority group.

To implement that, a three man Board should be established by the Administrator of Veterans Affairs to which every case of a veteran whose objectives have been thwarted because of his race, color, creed, or national origin must be submitted before that case is abandoned by the Veterans Administration.

Employers and the Negro veteran.

Agitation arose over the evident lack of consideration showed to veterans when those veterans happened to be Negroes, by industrialists and other civilian leaders when planning for, or executing plans for veterans. The Conference would urge industrialists and other employers to erase the dirty shadow of discrimination that surrounds their training programs, and urges them to make those programs available to Negro veterans on the same basis as for white veterans.

Housing.

The Conference was aroused because of the general lack of housing facilities and the general absence of adequate plans that are specific enough to alleviate the housing shortage for Negro veterans.

The Conference sent telegrams to President Truman, the Honorable Brandt Spence, Chairman House Banking and Currency Committee, and the Speaker of the House, Samuel Rayburn, voicing its grave concern over the action of the Senate Banking and Currency Committee with respect to the Wagner-Blender-Taft Bill, and urging them to take decisive action toward its final passage.

Continuing Committee.

Because of the seriousness of the plight of Negro veterans throughout the state of New Jersey, and because Negro veterans are gravely concerned about their own welfare, formation of a Continuing Committee was seen as necessary to follow-through on the objectives of the Conference. The Conference, therefore, authorized the appointment of such a committee which will have the authority to (1) summarize the findings of the Conference, and (2) to take whatever action it deems necessary to further the aims of the Conference.

The Continuing Committee consists of the following persons:

Chairman - Roy E. Morris
Industrial Relations Secretary
New Jersey Urban League

Secretary - Theodore E. LeVere
Trenton, New Jersey

James M. Young
Englewood, New Jersey

Jesse L. Boone
Bloomfield, New Jersey

Elwood L. Dean
Newark, New Jersey

Thomas H. Jennings
New Brunswick, New Jersey

William D. Travis
East Orange, New Jersey

Manning Wade
Elizabeth, New Jersey